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UNCLAS PARIS 001715

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SCUL](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: KABUL-PARIS DIRECT ACCESS MEDIA PROJECT

[1](#)1. (U) Please see request for mission action in paragraph 3.

[1](#)2. (U) Embassy Paris plans an exchange for Afghan television leaders to build relations with French counterparts. The goal is to establish partnerships in creating and disseminating programs about Afghanistan, and to increase the visibility of Afghan produced programs for French-speaking audiences. In this way, French audiences will have greater direct access to in-depth news from Afghanistan, access that can help to strengthen French support for U.S. policy. Post notes that the most effective programs in influencing French public opinion thus far have been tied to visits by Afghans. Programs involving a group visit by Afghan women parliamentarians and a separate visit by Afghan governors were both well-received with positive media coverage. The French media very much value the opportunity to speak directly with Afghans, especially those outside of the central government in Kabul, as they are very effective in telling their own story of current challenges and needs.

[1](#)3. (U) We have made preliminary contact with SCA/PPD and Kabul Public Affairs (PAS) and have secured funding for this program. We would appreciate the assistance of PAS Kabul in identifying three media leaders able to travel from three different and respected channels. These leaders should actually produce televised information programs, such as documentaries and/or news features. We also seek Embassy Kabul's assistance in helping these individuals obtain any needed documentation, including Schengen visas, for travel. Finally, we would welcome the participation of an LES escort from PAS Kabul who would be able to assist in building these relationships into the future.

[1](#)4. (U) Embassy Paris will be able to subtitle at least one film by each participant, to be carried out in advance of the visit so that we can show the participants, work here in Paris. The planned visit will include film showings followed by question and answer sessions, as well as working visits to French television and other media offices. We will also organize interviews to highlight media freedom in Afghanistan.

[1](#)5. (U) Embassy Paris appreciates the support of our mission in Kabul and we welcome your ideas and suggestions in how best to make this a successful project.

RIVKIN